

January 2005

Dear Governor Gregoire and members of the Legislature:

On behalf of the Washington Higher Education Coordinating Board, I am pleased to present the 2004 Statewide Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education.

Between now and 2010, a record number of students will approach the doors of our colleges and universities. Clearly, we cannot address this monumental challenge – especially during a time of severe budget constraints – by continuing the status quo. That is why the 2004 Strategic Master Plan calls for fundamental changes in the way we think about, manage, and fund higher education in Washington. It aims to deliver results – both for the students we serve and the taxpayers who pay the bills.

First and foremost, the 2004 plan is an “action plan” for policy-makers and educators. It sets clear and measurable goals and lays out a detailed implementation plan with costs and performance indicators to measure our progress. And, as our board has said repeatedly, it also will be a “living document.” We will update it as needed to reflect our progress in implementing its proposals and achieving its goals.

In closing, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the hundreds of people across the state who have participated in developing this final document. We look forward to continuing to work closely with all of you in the months and years ahead as we implement the plan and achieve our shared goals for higher education and the citizens of Washington.

Sincerely,



Bob Craves
Board Chairman

WASHINGTON HIGHER EDUCATION COORDINATING BOARD

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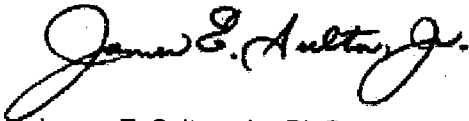
Dear Governor Gregoire and members of the Legislature:

In today's competitive global economy, it is no longer enough to have a high school diploma. Some form of postsecondary education – job training, associate degree or professional degree – is required for nearly all family-wage jobs. Yet, as the importance of education beyond high school is increasing, the opportunity for Washington residents to get the education and training they need is on the verge of declining.

The 2004 Strategic Master Plan for Higher Education recognizes that student success matters and is directly linked to our state's future prosperity. It calls for increases in the number of students who earn college degrees, complete job training programs, and demonstrate improved literacy skills. And it sets clear and measurable goals so we can track our progress.

The final plan represents an unprecedented level of input and participation from educators, elected officials, policy-makers, and citizens across Washington. I would like to express my deep appreciation and gratitude to the hundreds of people who have contributed their time, ideas, and feedback over the past two years. A special thanks also to our board members and staff for their hard work and commitment to helping students in our state succeed. All of these participants – particularly the members of the Legislature – have helped ensure that this plan will never sit on a shelf and gather dust.

Sincerely,



James E. Sulton, Jr., Ph.D.
Executive Director